THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) and (b). The telephone facilities in tribal areas of Madhya Pradesh including tribal areas of Mandla and Bilaspur districts are adequate. The existing status and plan for expansion of telephone exchange systems in these areas is given in *Statement.*

(c) and (d). Yes, Sir. Mandla, Niwas and Dindori are the three Tehsils in Mandla district Dindori THQ is already connected to Mandla DHQ through Satellite System. Niwas THQ has been planned to be connected to Mandla DHQ through Satellite.

STATEMENT

The existing status and plan for expansion of telephone exchange systems in the Tribal areas of Madhya Pradesh, Mandla District and Bilaspur District

S. No.	District	Existing Status			Plan 1996-97	
		Existing cap.	DELs	Waiting List	Net Cap. addition	DELs addition
1.	Mandla (tribal area)	368	308	0	480	288
2.	Bilaspur (tribal area)	3464	2002	2006	1456	874
3.	Madhya Pradesh (Tribal area)	150638	108811	5213	7800	5600

Telephone connection on Medical ground

3350. DR. G.R. SARODE : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have provided telephone on Medical Ground;

(b) if so, the criteria rules for the allotment;

(c) whether the temporary telephone connections have been provided to the applicants on the Medical Ground after their registration under general specific category;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) whether the Government propose to abolish this system.

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Temporary connection on medical grounds can be given for six months on double the rental charges. If extension of temporary connection on medical grounds is required beyond six months, applicant has to register for a telephone connection.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) It is felt that six months period is sufficient for a temporary requirement of a telephone connection. If a subscriber wants a telephone connection beyond six months, he should therefore register for a telephone connection.

(e) No, Sir.

Reduction in Excise Duty

3351. JUSTICE GUMAN LAL LODHA :
PROF. PREM SINGH CHANDUMAJRA :

Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have recently announced reduction in the excise duty for the steel industry;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether despite this announcement the steel producing units will have to pay more amount as excise duty in comparison to last year;

(d) if so, the major reason therefor; and

(e) whether the price of Indian Steel is likely to go up in the World Market because of increase in the excise duty?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d). Do not arise.